

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a multi-ply core component, comprising the steps of:

providing a mold press having an upper die and a lower die defining a mold cavity, at least one of the upper die and the lower die having a plurality of protrusions;

disposing a first wood composite board and a second wood composite board within the mold cavity; and

fusing the first and second boards proximate the plurality of protrusions by compressing the first and second boards in the mold cavity through application of heat and pressure and forming high-density portions proximate the plurality of protrusions and low-density portions adjacent the high-density portions,

wherein the first and second boards are fused in the high-density portions.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim~~2~~ 1, including the step of forming channels in the first and second boards, each of the channels having a bottom and side walls extending from and integral with the bottom and an outer planar surface.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim~~2~~ 1, including the step of compressing the first and second boards sufficiently to achieve high-density portions having a specific gravity of at least about 1.30.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim~~2~~ 1, including the step of compressing the first and second boards sufficiently to achieve high density portions having a thickness of at least about 0.25 inch.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~6~~ 1, including the step of compressing the first and second boards sufficiently to achieve low density portions having a thickness of at least about 1.00 inch.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, including the steps of:
providing the upper die with a first plurality of protrusions;
providing the lower die with a second plurality of protrusions; and
~~aligned with~~ aligning the first plurality of protrusions with the second plurality of protrusions.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, including the step of providing as the first and second boards one of insulation board and softboard.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, including the step of providing as the first and second boards insulation boards having an initial thickness of between about 0.70 inch to about 0.80 inch.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, including the step of providing insulation boards that are resin-free.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, including the step of compressing the boards by application of a maximum pressure sustained for a predetermined period during said compressing step.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, including the step of applying the maximum pressure for at least about 150 seconds.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, including the step of applying the maximum pressure for about five minutes.

Claims 15-33 (Cancelled).